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First Named Inventor

Thomas Seth Belcher

Art Unit

3711

Examiner Name

Vishu K. Mendiratta

Attorney Docket Number

03-0431.01

ENCLOSURES (Check all that apply)

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Remarks

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT

Firm Name	Lanier Ford Shaver & Payne P.C.		
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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES**

In re Application of: Thomas Seth Belcher, et al.

Group Art Unit: 3711

Serial No.: 10/627,440

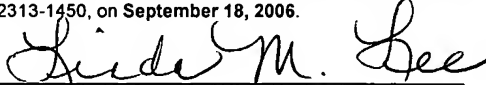
Filed: July 25, 2003

Examiner: Vishnu Mendiratta

Title: **A PORTABLE, ADAPTABLE DRAWING
SURFACE FOR STRATEGY GAMES**

APPELLANT'S REVISED APPEAL BRIEF

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

<p>Certificate of Mailing under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8</p> <p>I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first-class mail in an envelope address to: Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on September 18, 2006.</p> <p> _____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Linda M. Lee Printed Name of Person Signing Certificate</p>

Attorney Docket No.: 03-0431.01
Inventors: Belcher, et al

Dear Sir:

In response to the Notification of Non-Compliant Brief mailed August 16, 2006, Appellant hereby submits its Revised Brief under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REAL PARTY IN INTEREST.....	4
RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES	5
STATUS OF CLAIMS	6
STATUS OF AMENDMENTS	7
SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER	8
GROUND FOR REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL	11
ARGUMENT.....	12
A. Overview of the Cited References	12
B. Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 are not anticipated by the ‘624 Patent.....	12
1. <i>Standard for Standard for § 102 Rejections</i>	12
2. <i>The ‘624 Patent Fails to Disclose, Expressly or Inherently, All of the Limitations Claimed</i>	13
C. Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) ,Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 are patentable over the ‘624 Patent in view of the ‘246 Patent.....	15
1. <i>Standard for § 103 Rejections</i>	15
2. <i>The Rejections of Independent Claims 1 and 11</i>	17
3. <i>The prior art references do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations.</i>	21
CONCLUSION.....	21
APPENDIX OF THE CLAIMS INVOLVED IN THIS APPEAL	23
EVIDENCE APPENDIX	29
RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX.....	30

REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest is BC Products, a Delaware corporation having its principal place of business at 1233 Willowbrook Drive, Apt. 1, Huntsville, Alabama 35802.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no other appeals and/or interferences known to Appellant.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Appellant has appealed to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences from the final rejection of claims 1 through 20.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendments have been entered since Final Rejection dated February 11, 2005.

SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

The claimed subject matter is generally drawn to a system of a drawing and gaming surface. Embodiments of this system are portable, contain a re-usable drawing plane that is easily erasable, are adaptable to game progress allowing for custom-created maps, provide a firm surface for game pieces and drawing, or contain a combination of these attributes. Existing systems fail in these matters and are thus inconvenient to use. This system is intended to correct that failure.

Independent Claim 1 is drawn to a plane comprised of tiles such as tile 100 shown in Figure 1 that interconnect together as shown in Figure 2. Tile 100 in Figure 1 comprises tile surface 101 and a plurality of edges 105a-d. Although tile 100 is shown with four edges, it could be configured with any number of edges greater than three.

The drawing and game surface system of Claim 1 also contains a grid formed by delineations that align with the delineations on the interconnecting tiles. One example of this is the Cartesian grid 102 that appears on tile surface 101. See paragraphs [0029] and [0032] of Applicant's specification. The system of Claim 1 uses non-flexible tiles (tile 100). Tile 100 can be made from any suitable polymeric or other lightweight material that can provide a sufficiently non-flexible tile. See paragraph [0030] of Applicant's specification.

The tile surface (101) of Claim 1 is a dry-erase surface, that is, it is compatible with the use of dry-erase markers upon it such that marks from such a dry-erase marker are non-permanent and easily erasable without resort to solvent, e.g., water or cleaning solution. See paragraph [0031] of Applicant's specification. This drawing and game surface system as drawn in Claim 1 provides an adaptable, reusable and firm surface for playing strategy games or for use as a planning board.

Dependent Claim 2 is the drawing and game surface of Claim 1 where there is a specific means for interconnecting the tiles uses shaped projections. See paragraph [0035], [0036], [0038],

and [0040] of the Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 3 is the system of Claim 2 where the surface is comprised of a specific surface. See paragraph [0031] of the Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 4 is the system of Claim 1 where the grid comprises one of a Cartesian grid and a honeycomb grid. See paragraph [0031] of the Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 5 is the system of Claim 4 with the same surface as Claim 3. Dependent Claim 6 is the system of Claim 5 where the means for interconnecting tiles uses shaped projections similarly to Claim 2. Dependent Claims 7 and 8 are the system of Claim 5 where the method for interconnecting tiles uses pegs. See paragraph [0037] of Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 9 is the system of Claim 5 where the method for interconnecting tiles is a tongue and groove method. See paragraph [0039] of Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 10 is the system of Claim 5 where the method for interconnecting uses magnets. See paragraph [0041] of Applicant's specification.

Independent Claim 11 is a tile for use in assembling a portable, adaptable gaming plane. The tile (tile 100 of Figure 1) is substantially non-flexible and provides a surface upon which to draw eraseable maps for strategy games. See paragraph [0030] of Applicant's specification. Tile 100 in Figure 1 comprises tile surface 101 and a plurality of edges 105a-d. Each tile contains a means for interconnecting with other tiles; one method of doing this is shown in Figure 1 edges 107a-b and 109a-b. Although tile 100 is shown with four edges, it could be configured with any number of edges greater than three.

The tile surface (101) of Claim 11 is a dry-erase surface, that is, it is compatible with the use of dry-erase markers upon it such that marks from such a dry-erase marker are non-permanent and easily erasable without resort to solvent, e.g., water or cleaning solution. See paragraph [0031] of Applicant's specification. The drawing and game surface system of Claim 11 also contains a grid formed by delineations that align with the delineations on the interconnecting tiles. One example of

this is the cartesian grid 102 that appears on tile surface 101. See paragraphs [0029] and [0032] of Applicant's specification. This drawing and game surface system as drawn in Claim 11 provides an adaptable, reusable and firm surface for playing strategy games or use as a planning board.

Dependent Claim 12 is the drawing and game surface of Claim 1 where there is a specific means for interconnecting the tiles uses shaped projections. See paragraph [0035], [0036], [0038], and [0040] of the Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 13 is the system of Claim 12 where the surface is comprised of a specific surface. See paragraph [0031] of the Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 14 is the system of Claim 11 where the grid comprises one of a Cartesian grid and a honeycomb grid. See paragraph [0031] of the Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 15 is the system of Claim 14 with the same surface as Claim 13. Dependent Claim 16 is the system of Claim 15 where the means for interconnecting tiles uses shaped projections similarly to Claim 12. Dependent Claims 17 and 18 are the system of Claim 15 where the method for interconnecting tiles uses pegs. See paragraph [0037] of Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 19 is the system of Claim 15 where the method for interconnecting tiles is a tongue and groove method. See paragraph [0039] of Applicant's specification. Dependent Claim 20 is the system of Claim 15 where the method for interconnecting tiles uses magnets. See paragraph [0041] of Applicant's specification.

GROUND FOR REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

The following issues are presented to the Board of Appeals for decision.

1. Whether Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) are anticipated by *Bassett*, U.S. Pat. No. 3,057,624 (the “ ‘624 Patent”).
2. Whether Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the ‘624 Patent in view of *Ward* U.S. Pat. No. 4,060,246 (the “ ‘246 Patent”).

ARGUMENT

A. Overview of the Cited References

The Examiner finally rejected claims 1 through 20 of the present application under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or § 103 as being unpatentable over the '624 Patent and/or the '246 Patent. The '624 Patent discloses a segmented board for games such as checkers and the like comprised of a plurality of interlocking tiles. The tiles are disclosed to be a "two ply member formed of cardboard, plastic, or any other suitable material". *Bassett*, Col. 2, ll. 2-3. There is no teaching that the game board or the tiles comprising the game board are proposed to be marked or drawn upon.

The '246 Patent discloses a game for simulating a horse race betting parlor that includes one or more panels for displaying race results to the players. The panels are described as possibly being formed such that they are suitable to be marked upon with a pencil or pen. *See Ward*, Col. 5, ll. 1-5. The panels are also described to be formable with a hard surface suitable to be used with a readily erasable felt-tip marking pen, to include a "Rite-On Wipe-Off" marker-pen. *See id.*, at ll. 35-52. However, there is no teaching that the panels are to be segmented or otherwise interlocking with other panels.

B. Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 are not anticipated by the '624 Patent.

1. *Standard for Standard for § 102 Rejections*

"For a prior art reference to anticipate in terms of 35 U.S.C. Section 102, **every element** of the claimed invention **must** be **identically** shown in a single reference." *Diversitech Corp. v.*

Century Steps, Inc., 850 F.2d 675, 677, 7 U.S.P.Q.2d 1315, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 1988; emphasis added). The disclosed elements must be arranged as in the claim under review. See Lindemann Machinefabrik v. American Hoist & Derrick Co., 730 F.2d 1452, 1458, 221 U.S.P.Q. 481, 485 (Fed. Cir. 1984). If any claim, element, or step is absent from the reference that is being relied upon, there is no anticipation. Kloster Speedsteel AB v. Crucible, Inc., 793 F.2d 1565, 230 U.S.P.Q. 81 (Fed. Cir. 1986; emphasis added). Anticipation under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 requires that there be an **identity of invention**. See Shatterproof Glass Corp. v. Libbey-Owens Ford Co., 758 F.2d 613, 619, 225 U.S.P.Q. 634, 637 (Fed. Cir. 1985; emphasis added). In PTO proceedings, claim language should be read in light of the specification as it would be interpreted by one of ordinary skill in the art. In re Sneed, 710 F.2d 1544, 1548, 218 U.S.P.Q. 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1983). The following analysis of the present rejections is respectfully offered with guidance from the foregoing controlling case law decisions.

2. *The '624 Patent Fails to Disclose, Expressly or Inherently, All of the Limitations Claimed*

In the Final Office Action from which this Appeal is taken, Examiner argues that the '624 Patent discloses that its board may be formed of plastic and further that plastic is well-known substantially non-porous material that is suitable for use with dry-erase markers. The limitation in Claims 1 and 11, the independent claims, is directed to a tile with a *substantially* non-porous surface that is suitable for use with dry-erase markers. However, the '624 Patent fails to teach or suggest anything about the surface of its game board, does not teach or suggest anything regarding whether the board is designed to be marked upon, and does not teach or suggest anything regarding the use of dry-erase markers. Therefore, Examiner's contention may only be true if such the '624 Patent's

disclosure of plastic as a constituent material inherently teaches the claimed surface. *See* Detailed Action, Page 2. (Examiner argues that substantially non-porous surface is inherently disclosed)

For a claim to be inherently anticipated, the feature or result the Examiner claims to be inherently taught must occur or be present in every use of the material. The law is well-settled that “[i]nherency, . . . may not be established by probabilities or possibilities. The mere fact that a certain thing may result from a given set of circumstances is not sufficient.” *In re Robertson*, 169 F.3d 743, 745, 49 USPQ 1949, 1950-1 (Fed. Cir. 1999); *see also Atlas Powder Co. v. IRECO, Inc.*, 190 F.3d 1342, 1347, 51 USPQ2d 1943, 1946 (Fed. Cir. 1999), *W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1554, 220 USPQ 303, 314 (Fed. Cir. 1983). In other words, if there can be surfaces made of plastic that are not compatible with the use of dry-erase markers such that marks may be easily erased, then the substantially non-porous surface is not an inherent result of the use of plastic as a material to form the game board of the ‘624 Patent, and the ‘624 Patent does not anticipate the present invention.

Appellants contend that those skilled in the art will appreciate that tiles similar to those taught in the ‘624 Patent may be formed of plastic but would not possess non-porous surfaces suitable for use with dry-erase markers. *See Ward*, Col. 5, ll. 30-61. Those of ordinary skill in the art recognize that surfaces upon which dry-erase markers may be used such that marks are readily erasable are non-porous surfaces and that simple plastic, without a treatment of its surface, does not provide a proper surface for use with dry-erase markers. As such, the ‘624 Patent fails to inherently disclose the surface claimed in the present application because a non-porous surface does not result from every use of plastic to form a game board.

Moreover, the ‘624 Patent fails to disclose, expressly or otherwise, the limitation added by present Amendment of each side comprising interconnecting means so that each tile may be

mutually interconnected with any other tile. Since the '624 Patent does not inherently disclose the claimed limitations, it does not anticipate the present invention as claimed in Claims 1 and 11. Further, since the reference does not anticipate the independent claims, it does not anticipate the claims that depend therefrom. Therefore, the Examiner erred in rejecting Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 and such claims are allowable over the '624 Patent.

C. Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) ,Claims 1-7, 9, 11-17, 19 are patentable over the '624 Patent in view of the '246 Patent.

1. *Standard for § 103 Rejections*

In order to establish a *prima facie case of obviousness* under 35 U.S.C. § 103, three criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves, or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. *See* MPEP Section 706.02(j). Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. *Id.* Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. *Id.*

Under the first criteria, the suggestion, teaching or motivation to combine prior art references may flow, *inter alia*, from the references themselves, and the knowledge of one ordinary skill in the art or the nature of the problem to be solved. *See Winner International Royal Corp. v. Wang*, 202 F.3d 1340, 53 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1580 (Fed. Cir. 2000); *In re Fine*, 837 F. 2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988); *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). Although a reference need not expressly teach that the disclosure contained therein should be combined with

another, showing of combinability, in whatever form must nevertheless be “clear and particular.” *Winner International Royal Corp.*, 202 F. 3d at 1586. Since there is no motivation or suggestion to combine the references, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have viewed the Appellant’s invention as obvious. *See In re Dance*, 160 F. 3d 1339, 1343, 48 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1635, 1639 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *Gambro Lundia AB v. Baxter Healthcare Corp.*, 110 F. 3d 1573, 1578, 42 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1378, 1383 (Fed. Cir. 1997). (“The absence of such a suggestion to combine is dispositive in an obviousness determination”).

The second criteria in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, is that there must be a reasonable expectation of success. *In re Merck & Co., Inc.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 U.S.P.Q. 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Obviousness does not require absolute predictability, however, at least some degree of predictability is required. Evidence showing there is no reasonable expectation of success may support a conclusion of non-obviousness. *In re Rinehart*, 531 F.2d 1048, 189 U.S.P.Q. 143 (CCPA 1976).

The last criteria to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of a claimed invention is that all the claimed limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (CCPA 1974). “All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art.” *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385, 165 U.S.P.Q. 494, 496 (CCPA 1970). If an independent claim is not obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103, then any claim depending therefrom is non-obvious. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). It is the first and third criteria under the standard for a § 103 rejection which Applicants will focus their arguments on.

2. *The Rejections of Independent Claims 1 and 11*

Examiner states that the '624 Patent teaches a gaming plane having a plurality of tiles, that each have at least three sides that comprise means for interconnecting, and then reasserts the contention that simply because the '624 Patent discloses that the board may be made by a plastic material, that the surface is inherently substantially non-porous and suitable for use with dry-erase markers. Examiner next argues alternatively that even if the '624 Patent is deemed not to disclose such a surface, the '246 Patent does, and attempts to use the '246 Patent to bolster the inherency argument.

a. There is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves, or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings.

With the standard for a *prima facie* case of obviousness in mind, the references do not suggest or motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to modify it in any way or to combine it with any other reference teachings, particularly those of the '624 Patent and the '246 Patent, to provide a game board comprising a plurality of interconnecting tiles which are formed with substantially non-porous surfaces for use with dry-erase markers. A showing of a suggestion, teaching, or motivation to combine prior art references as required to find an invention obvious must be clear and particular and broad conclusory statements of the teaching of multiple references, standing alone, are not evidence. *See Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp. v. Phillip Morris Inc.*, 229 F. 3d 1120, 1124, 56 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1456, 1460 (Fed. Cir. 2000.) The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does

not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

1) *The '624 Patent.* The '624 Patent does not suggest or motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to modify it in any way or to combine it with other reference teachings. Specifically, the '624 patent does not disclose a surface upon which marks may be made using dry-erase markers. Indeed, the '624 patent does not teach or suggest drawing upon its game board at all. In fact, the games taught to be played upon the game board disclosed in the '624 Patent, are not games involving drawing, but are games such as "chess, checkers, and the like." *Bassett*, Col. 1, l. 12. Obviously, these games do not involve, anticipate or require drawing of any sort. Not only does this reference not expressly teach that the disclosure contained therein should be combined with another, but the Examiner has provided no showing of combinability, in any form, which is "clear and particular." See *In re Dembiczak*, 175 F. 3d 994, 1000, 50 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1614, 1620 (Fed. Cir. 1999).

2) *The '246 Patent.* Lastly, the '246 Patent merely discloses a game that uses panels that may comprise a surface compatible with the use of dry-erase markers. However, there is no suggestion, expressly or implicitly, to modify the boards of the game to make interconnecting tiles. Broad conclusory statements regarding the teaching of multiple prior art references, are not evidence of a motivation to combine those references as would support a claim of obviousness. See *Ecolocchem, Inc. v. Southern California Edison Co.*, 227 F. 3d 1361, 1372, 56 U.S.P.Q.

2d 1065, 1076 (Fed. Cir. 2000.)

35 U.S.C. § 103 makes clear that the obviousness analysis should take place, “at the time the invention was made.” *In re Dembiczak*, 175 F. 3d 994, 50 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1614, 1616 (Fed. Cir. 1999). It is this phrase that guards against entering into the “tempting but forbidden zone of hindsight.” *Id.* “Our case law makes clear that the best defense against the subtle but powerful attraction of a hindsight-based obviousness analysis is rigorous application of the requirement for a showing of the teaching or motivation to combine prior art references.” *In re Dembiczak*, 175 F. 3d at 999, 50 U.S.P.Q. 2d at 1617. The only motivation offered by the Examiner at page 3 of the Detailed Action is as follows:

Board game art area is a highly competitive area and using substantially non-porous dry-erase surface such as plastic facilitates using the same board over and over again saving cost, thus making the game less costly.

In order to save money, it would have been obvious to use plastic material that are substantially non-porous and compatible to dry-erase markers by using the same board over and over again. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have suggested using plastic material that are substantially non-porous and compatible to dry-erase markers by using the same board over and over again for the purpose of money.

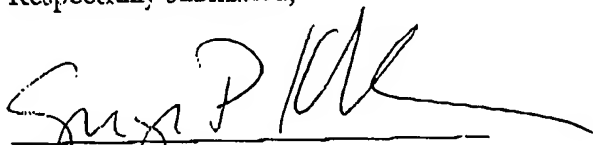
This motivation, saving money, proposed by the Examiner, is far different than the goal of Claims 1 and 11 (providing a game board surface upon which maps are drawn, that may be adapted to continue the hand-drawn maps when the game is about to progress off the game board). Moreover, Examiner provides no basis for these “Official Notice” assertions regarding board game art area pursuant to 2144.03 of the MPEP. *See in Re Ahlert*, 424 F.2d 1088, 1091, 165 USPQ 418, 420-421 (CCPA 1970) (assertions of technical facts must always be supported by citation of some reference

works). As such Appellant respectfully traverses such assertions. In summary, it is a basic tenant of patent law that the references must be considered as a whole and must suggest the desirability and thus the obviousness of making the combination when applying 35 U.S.C. § 103 to reject a claim or claims. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992); *In re Eli Lilly & Co.*, 402 F.2d 943, 14 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1741 (Fed. Cir. 1990). The ultimate determination of whether an invention would have been obvious is a legal conclusion based on the totality of the evidence including underlying factual inquiries including the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art, and the objective evidence of non-obviousness. See *Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp.*, 229 F.3d. at 1124. A review of the references indicates that they do not suggest the desirability of combining interconnecting tiles that form a game board of the '624 with a surface upon which dry-erase markers may be used. Moreover, if the Examiner is attempting to argue that the suggestion, teaching, or motivation to combine the two references patent flows from the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, he has provided no evidence to that affect, and instead has offered only conclusory statements. It is clear that the Examiner here used the teaching of the present invention to combine the '624 and '246 Patents. "It is impermissible to use the claimed invention as an instruction manual or 'template' to piece together the teachings of the prior art so that the claimed invention is rendered obvious." *In re Fritch*, 972 F.2d 1260, 1266, 23 USPQ2d 1780, 1784 (Fed. Cir. 1992)(quoting *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 1075, 5 USPQ2d 1596, 1600 (Fed. Cir. 1988)).

For these reasons, among others, applicants respectively submit that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of independent Claims 1 and 11 have been overcome, and that they are now in condition for allowance.

the prior amendments and arguments in this case, Claims 1-20 define tiles for an adaptable game board, each having substantially non-porous surface upon which marks may be made with dry-erase markers, not taught or suggested by any of the above cited references, either alone or in combination. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-20 are now in condition for allowance. An earlier notice of reversal of the Examiner's rejection is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "George P. Kobler", written over a horizontal line.

George P. Kobler

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Claims 2-10, and 12-20 depend either directly or indirectly from Claims 1 and 11 and thus incorporate the limitations of the independent claim. If an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious as well. *See In re, Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). The Patent Office has provided no other base references upon which to build arguments for rejections of the dependent claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 2-10 and 12-20 are in condition for allowance as well.

3. ***The prior art references do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations.***

Claims 1 and 11, as amended, contain limitations not taught or suggested in the prior art references cited by Examiner. Specifically, together the references fail to solve the problem solved by the present invention, i.e., providing an adaptable game board. The present invention addresses this by providing tiles that are mutually interlocking, or interconnecting, meaning that each tile provided may be interconnecting with any other tile. Thus, means for interconnection are provided on each side of the tiles. While the '624 Patent teaches interlocking segments, the segments must be interconnecting in a specific manner in order to achieve the game board. As discussed above, Examiner attempts to combine the '246 Patent because of its disclosure of a surface compatible with dry-erase markers. Thus, the combination of '624 and the '246 Patent fails to teach every limitation claimed.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Appellant respectfully submits that, in view of the foregoing, and in view of

APPENDIX OF THE CLAIMS INVOLVED IN THIS APPEAL

1. A portable, adaptable gaming plane, said gaming plane providing an area upon which to draw erasable maps for strategy games comprising a plurality of interconnecting tiles, each of said tiles being a substantially non-flexible tile and comprising:
 - a. at least three edges, each of said at least three edges comprising means for interconnecting;
 - b. a substantially non-porous surface compatible with the use of a dry-erase marker such that marks upon said surface made using said dry-erase marker are easily erased; and
 - c. a grid perceptible on said surface, said grid formed by delineations such that said delineations align with delineations forming like grids perceptible on like tiles interconnected with said tile.
2. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 1, wherein said means for interconnecting comprises:
 - a. shaped projections extending centrifugally from adjacent edges of said tile; and
 - b. mouths recessing centripetally from edges of said tile opposite said adjacent edges, said mouths configured to lockingly receive shaped projections extending from said other like tiles.
3. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 2, wherein said tile comprises a substrate upon which is disposed said grid and wherein said surface is achieved by overlaying a

substantially non-porous cladding upon said substrate such that said grid is perceptible through said substantially non-porous cladding.

4. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 1, wherein said grid comprises one of a Cartesian grid and a honeycomb grid formed by said delineations.
5. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 4, wherein said tile comprises a substrate upon which is disposed said grid and wherein said surface is achieved by overlaying a substantially non-porous cladding upon said substrate such that said grid is perceptible through said substantially non-porous cladding.
6. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 5, wherein said means for interconnecting comprises:
 - a. shaped projections extending centrifugally from adjacent edges of said tile; and
 - b. mouths recessing centripetally from edges of said tile opposite said adjacent edges, said mouths configured to lockingly receive shaped projections extending from said other like tiles.
7. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 5, wherein said means for interconnecting comprises:
 - a. at least one peg extending centrifugally from at least one edge of said tile; and
 - b. at least one aperture recessing centripetally from at least one edge of said tile, said at least one aperture configured to lockingly receive a similarly configured peg

extending from said other like tiles.

8. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 7, wherein said at least one peg further comprises a ball located at an end of said at least one peg distally from said tile center.
9. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 5, wherein said means for interconnecting comprises
 - a. tongues extending centrifugally from adjacent edges of said tile; and
 - b. grooves recessing centripetally from edges of said tile opposite said adjacent edges, said grooves configured to lockingly receive tongues extending from said other like tiles.
10. The portable, adaptable gaming plane of Claim 5, wherein said means for interconnecting comprises:
 - a. a first magnetic material having a polarity disposed on an at least one edge of said tile; and
 - b. second magnetic material having an opposite polarity to that of said first magnetic material disposed on an at least one edge of said tile.
11. A tile for use in assembling a portable, adaptable gaming plane, said tile being a substantially non-flexible tile, said gaming plane providing an area upon which to draw erasable maps for strategy games, said tile comprising:
 - a. at least three edges, each of said at least three edges comprising means for

- interconnecting at least three a plurality of like tiles therewith;
- b. a substantially non-porous surface compatible with the use of a dry-erase marker such that marks upon said surface made using said dry-erase marker are easily erased; and
 - c. a grid perceptible on said surface, said grid formed by delineations such that said delineations align with delineations forming like grids perceptible on said like tiles interconnected with said tile irrespective of relative orientations of said tile and said like tiles.
12. The tile of Claim 11, wherein said means for interconnecting other like tiles therewith comprises:
- a. shaped projections extending centrifugally from adjacent edges of said tile; and
 - b. mouths recessing centripetally from edges of said tile opposite said adjacent edges, said mouths configured to lockingly receive shaped projections extending from said plurality of like tiles.
13. The tile of Claim 12, wherein said tile comprises a substrate upon which is disposed said grid and wherein said surface is achieved by overlaying a substantially non-porous cladding upon said substrate such that said grid is perceptible through said substantially non-porous cladding.
14. The tile of Claim 11, wherein said grid comprises one of a Cartesian grid and a honeycomb grid formed by said delineations.

15. The tile of Claim 14, wherein said tile comprises a substrate upon which is disposed said grid and wherein said surface is achieved by overlaying a substantially non-porous cladding upon said substrate such that said grid is perceptible through said substantially non-porous cladding.
16. The tile of Claim 15, wherein said means for interconnecting said plurality of like tiles therewith comprises:
 - a. shaped projections extending centrifugally from adjacent edges of said tile; and
 - b. mouths recessing centripetally from edges of said tile opposite said adjacent edges, said mouths configured to lockingly receive shaped projections extending from said other like tiles.
17. The tile of Claim 15, wherein said means for interconnecting said plurality of like tiles therewith comprises:
 - a. at least one peg extending centrifugally from at least one edge of said tile; and
 - b. at least one aperture recessing centripetally from at least one edge of said tile, said at least one aperture configured to lockingly receive a similarly configured peg extending from said other like tiles.
18. The tile of Claim 17, wherein said at least one peg further comprises a ball located at an end of said at least one peg distally from said tile center.
19. The tile of Claim 15, wherein said means for interconnecting said plurality of like tiles

therewith comprises

- a. tongues extending centrifugally from adjacent edges of said tile; and
- b. grooves recessing centripetally from edges of said tile opposite said adjacent edges, said grooves configured to lockingly receive tongues extending from said other like tiles.

20. The tile of Claim 15, wherein said means for interconnecting said plurality of like tiles therewith comprises:

- a. a first magnetic material having a polarity disposed on an at least one edge of said tile; and
- b. second magnetic material having an opposite polarity to that of said first magnetic material disposed on an at least one edge of said tile.

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

NONE

RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

NONE